

135523
E16 P5
Q10

THE "PLEASURES"
OF THE CZAR, ETC.



BY
BERNARD LEAVITT

WITH THE HONORARY MEMBERS OF
THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, ETC.

1910

PRICE 50 CENTS

THE
“Pleasures” of the Czar
ETC.

BY
EZEKIEL LEAVITT.



ISRAEL FRIEDMAN
PRINTER
WASHINGTON, D. C.

PS 3523
E16 P5
1910

Transferred from
LILIA to the Office.
FEB 28 1911



CONTENTS

	Page
Preliminary Remarks.....	5
The "Pleasures" of the Czar.....	10
"Professor" Getzel	18
Hearts and Stomachs.....	30
Between Love and Duty.....	34
Thoughts.....	50
Who is Happy ?*.....	59
My Confession**	63

* Was published in "The American Hebrew."

** Translated from the Yiddish by *Alice Stone Blackwell*
and published in "The Jewish Exponent."

PRELIMINARY REMARKS

“He, Leavitt, is a singer of great, the greatest promise.”

(The late Dr. Jacob Voorsanger, Professor of the University of California and of Leland Stanford, Jr. University, in Emanu-El, Feb. 21, 1908.)

Obtaining permission from my highly esteemed friend Mr. Ezekiel Leavitt to publish in book form some of his very interesting comedies, etc., I deem it proper to make a few remarks about him, though I am well aware of the fact that Ezekiel Leavitt needs no introduction to the literary world.

Mr. Leavitt is “a writer with a message,” justly remarked one of his critics, and the truth of this opinion is disclosed in all his writings. He is “a masterful interpreter of both the despair and the hope of his own suffering people.” He is “a true Jewish poet, a true grandson of the prophets,” said the late Professor Voorsanger in Emanu-El, February 21, 1908. And a similar opinion of Leavitt’s poems is also expressed by Israel Zangwill in one of his letters to Leavitt, in which he, among other things, says: “I sympathize with your national aspiration and your prophetic effort to uplift the torch of idealism.”

The poems “My Creed,” “To My Nation,” “A Zionist Marseillaise,” “A Prayer,” and especially “They Tell Me,” are good examples to justify these opinions. In the last poem are some lines which can surely be considered real gems in the realm of poetry.

Take, for instance, these four lines:

“My God, my race, I will not change
For gold or jewels’ fires;
More than a stranger’s treasure-house,
A grave among my sires!”

Leavitt is a native of Russia, the land of oppression,

“Where they dig graves

For high ideals, and where the fist is law;

Where tyrants rule, whose kindness is like dew,

Their righteousness like webs which spiders draw;”

and, therefore, most of his poems are mournful, and his “songs are poisoned.”

“There is a depth of feeling in his (Leavitt’s) poems, and a beauty of sentiment and force of expression which remind the reader very strongly of the deep penetration into nature’s mysteries which we find in some of the best Russian poets of the day, like Tolstoi. To Leavitt, as to Tolstoi, nature seems to speak,” says Professor Gotthard Deutsch in “The Jewish Voice” of March 6, 1908. And this opinion will be shared by every one who will read “The Prophet” and “Deborah,” “an epic of great merit,” as William Jennings Bryan calls it in his “Commoner” of May 22, 1908.

“When Mr. Leavitt grows sarcastic he can be as bitter as sea-water. He echoes Heine,” remarks William Marion Reedy in his “Mirror” of February 6, 1908. And the poems “One of Many,” “‘Doctor’ Mendel,” “The Pig,” and “The Lion and the Dogs” are enough to confirm Mr. Reedy’s opinion.

Leavitt “lashes inhumanity with the wildest indignation; his soul is on fire when he traces the injustice of which his people have been the victims,” wrote one of his critics, and the poems, “To the Executioner,” “On Russia’s Frontier,” and “My Curse” are good evidence of the correctness of this view. Congressman Francis Burton Harrison expressed himself that these three poems

awoke in his heart a terrible hatred to the Russian Government and a profound sympathy to its victims.

In his remarkable poem, "A Lion's Spirit," which has "the strong frankness of a spiritualized Walt Whitman," as a critic remarked in "The Sun" of March 5, 1905, Leavitt says:

"Within me, even from my youth,
A lion's spirit dwells;
High do I rise: toward mighty deeds
My heart aspires and swells."

And this beautiful and touching poem he ends with these lines:

"God gave me thirst for great ideals
And, from my earliest breath,
Before a dog's life, I with joy
Would choose a lion's death."

And Leavitt always practices what he preaches! While yet a lad in Russia he did not fear to send from there an article to the American Hebrew weekly "Hapigoh," in which he unmercifully attacked Russia for her attitude toward the Jews, and a few years later he made known to the world his "Streamlet," which caused him much trouble and grief, but also fame and recognition. In this poem Leavitt compares the Russian Government to rocks and says to them:

"Rocks, laugh not! Granite does not last for aye;
Continual dropping hollows out the stone."

Since Leavitt is in America he published articles, poems and sketches in every leading Jewish and Jewish-English paper, and almost every contribution of his is reprinted many times.

"The man that makes a character makes foes," says Edward Young, and, therefore, a man of Leavitt's character, who likes to tell the truth, though "truth hurts," must have enemies; but the number of his admirers is much greater, and they are not only here but in different countries. The great thinker, Max Nordau, is one of them, and in every letter of his to Leavitt he assures him that he considers him as "one whose poetical gift and wonderful mastery of our venerable language he much admires."

Leavitt is one of our best orators and lecturers, and is always ready to advocate any good movement. He is an ardent Zionist and a great dreamer of the revived national ideal. He worked and works with word and pen and with great enthusiasm for this noble cause. He possesses a warm heart, strong convictions and firm principles. I want to recall here one fact of many similar ones. He attacked very strongly Ash's disgraceful and pornographic production, "The God of Vengeance;" he also bitterly attacked many times the outpourings of Emma Goldman; nevertheless, when he read in the papers that a New York Rabbi called the attention of the chief of police to Ash's play, and that a St. Louis Rabbi asked the chief of police to prevent Emma Goldman lecturing there, Mr. Leavitt published in the "Vorsteher" of March 12, 1908, a fiery article which ends thus: "I am ready to fight against plays like Ash's and against lectures like Emma Goldman's, but with honest weapons: with word and pen. But the people who go hand in hand with the police and demand from them 'justice,' such people deserve that we should consider them 'the meanest creatures.'" So defends an honest man the liberty of

those whom he personally dislikes and sometimes even condemns!

In conclusion, I want to say that "The Pleasures of the Czar," "Hearts and Stomachs," and "Thoughts" were published in "The Hebrew Standard;" "Professor Getzel" in "The Jewish Voice;" and "Between Love and Duty" in the "Menorah." The latter was originally written and published in the Russian language, and was translated into English by David A. Modell. For this publication, however, Leavitt has revised it.

A few lines of the poem "To Ezekiel Leavitt—Bard of Israel," which was published in "The Jewish Voice," will end my few remarks.

"Oh, Player! strike again thy chord,
Bold Judah sleeps, but is not dead!
As once before the lion roared,
So, roaring, will he rear his head."

LOUIS S. GOTTLIEB.

Washington, D. C., March 1910.

THE "PLEASURES" OF THE CZAR

A Tragi-Comedy in One Act.

- CHARACTERS: 1. CZAR NICHOLAS—a pale man of about 38, nervous, with closed, half idiotic eyes that cannot rest in their sockets. He wears an official coat, behung with crosses, medals and with tiny portraits of saints. From both his sides, two swords hang down; and upon his head he wears a gold crown which shakes continually and which can scarcely stay on his head.
2. ALEXANDRA—a fine-looking woman of thirty odd years, with the dainty manners of an aristocratic German—the wife of Nicholas.
3. MARIE—a dame of about sixty, with small and weak eyes. Her face is painted and powdered, making her appear like a superannuated actress—Nicholas' mother.
4. POBIEDONOSTSIEFF—a bent old man with a wrinkled face and with the side whiskers of a Russian under-officer. His appearance is terrible and repellant.
- | | | |
|---------------|---|--------------------|
| 5. STOLYPIN, | } | Czar's
Lackeys. |
| 6. WITTE, | | |
| 7. DOURNOVO, | | |
| 8. YERMOLOFF, | | |
| 9. NEIDGART, | | |
- "Gvardye" Officers (Body Guards) and Soldiers
Place..... Peterhof

Nicholas (in anger). "Oh, oh, oh! How times do change. Who could have imagined that the pride of a Romanoff should be so humbled? Who could have foretold that our dynasty should suffer so many indignities? And from whom? (Stamps his feet and seizes both swords with his hands). From mutineers, from

good-for-naughts! . . . From! . . . (Begins to tremble with intense excitement.)

Alexandra (tenderly). "Nicholas, my dear, my beloved, calm yourself! Your nerves are unstrung, your mind is mixed . . . (she stammers) . . . is confused."

Pobiedonostsieff (crossing himself). "May the Holy Virgin protect your majesty!"

Marie (with a pious countenance). "And the holy Athanasius, too!"

Stolypin. "Your majesty! You must have courage now. You must strengthen yourself, for without you we are powerless. The 'Muzjikes'—the two-footed machines, the rusty automaton which hitherto had not dared to utter a sound—demand now—do you hear, your Majesty?—they demand, not beg, land and liberty. And what answer can we give them?"

Pobiedonostsieff (in trembling voice). "Liberty in Russia? Oh, no! We must erase this dangerous word from all our dictionaries; we must stop the mouths of all the heathens who dare to mention this word."

Witte (with a cynical smile). "You are right, Constantine Petrovitch! Russia has never known of liberty, and perhaps she ought not to know it. But we must make some show before the world, too! You know the government treasury is now empty."

Dournovo and *Neidgart* (together). "There is still enough money for gallows and guns! For such holy purposes our Russian patriots will give away even their last groschen."

Marie (firmly). "We owe the world no explanation. My Sasha, your honored father, my little Nicholas, has always sought to satisfy only himself and the Church. And yet he lived until he died."

Pobiedonostsieff (with tears in his eyes). "May he rest in the arms of Jesus, my good and pious pupil."

Nicholas (fixing his eyes on Witte). "What say you, Count Sergey Julevitch? Our treasury is empty? Can we, then, make no loan outside of Russia? Outsiders do not know clearly our interests. We needs must confuse their brains with imaginary and unheard-of reports; and if bad comes to worse, you can turn to 'Zjidovski' bankers. I hate them—the 'Zjides,' but their money (sarcastically)—their money is all right. And if you will promise them a good interest, they will lend you money even if they knew the money would go for preparations for 'Pogroms' for their own nation."

Witte. "Still, your Majesty, we must, at least, make some reforms, in order to put outsiders off the scent."

Stolypin. "Who cares for outsiders? We must simply have a few reforms out of fear of our own murderers, who throw bombs right and left. One of my eyes aches even yet, from that dense smoke which that bomb had made in my palace. I cannot sleep in peace; I am in fear. We are all in danger!"

Pobiedonostsieff. "We must build more cloisters; we must be more pious; so God will not forsake us."

Marie. "Right, right! Heresy is growing in our land, and it is the cause of all our misfortunes."

Dournovo. "We must increase the number of spies; we must punish every slight offense against us with death; let the mean souls of the terrorists leave them on the gallows, upon the scaffold. Your Majesty; we need a dictator!"

Neidgart (kissing the Czar's boots). "Give us more Dubasoffs, Kourloffs, Minins, Rennenkampfs, and we will see to everything."

Marie. "It is said that the 'Zjides' are spreading all kinds of anarchistic and atheistic booklets over entire Russia; it is said that they preach free and harmful doctrines; we must teach them a good lesson."

Pobiedonostsieff. "Their fore-forefathers had put our Redeemer on the Cross. This is a nation of Anti-Christians, of exploiters, of blood-suckers . . . death to them all!"

Witte. "From the moral standpoint, we might well strangle those Jews, every one of them (Dournovo quietly to Neidgart: 'And what will become of his wife?') But from the economic standpoint, we must not do it, for it will be hard for us to get money outside of Russia. In the foreign newspapers, they make fun of us; they call us 'Barbarians,' 'Africans,' and such things weaken our credit there."

Nicholas (groaning). "Yermoloff's advice is that I should give my land to the 'mouzjikes'; Witte's advice is that I should make no more 'pogroms' upon Jews. Well, then, what remains to me in life? No land, and no enjoyment either. Oh, great spirit of my dear and beloved Ivan the Terrible. What to do? What to do?"

Marie. "I know, my little Nicholas, that the good news of Jewish heads cut off, of dishonored Jewish maidens, of wounded Jewish children, of the Jewish blood grown cold, makes you happier and merrier. Well, then, what is there to hinder? Have you not enough soldiers, or are you, perhaps, short in guns and knives? 'What of the foreign loans?' you ask. Oh, child, child! you are still very foolish. After the 'pogroms' have taken place, you might have it printed in the newspapers that your heart is aching, that you have great pity for the sacri-

fices, etc. Then you remain a kind-hearted Czar, and the joy of the 'pogroms' is still yours."

Alexandra. "No, no! It is not modern to make 'pogroms.' It is not nice for the civilized world to fill stomachs with feathers, to drive nails into eyes, and besides, it is, perhaps, even a pity, too."

Dournovo. "Pardon, Czarina! As an old soldier, I know of no pity, especially when the 'Zjides' are concerned, who are a menace to us."

Neidgart. "My friend Dournovo knows the Jews better than you do, Czarina. And, therefore, he has rightly remarked that they are a menace to our peace. To have pity on them? You are too good, Czarina! I swear to God, too good! I can shoot down ten Jews at once, as one shoots mad dogs. . . . I can cut up to pieces the Jewish women with their revolutionary 'Zjidelach' (little Jews), and this with a smile on my lips—I can—"

Pobiedonostsieff (with a pleased face). "We know that you can do that, dear brother. May Jesus give you new strength to crush the enemies of the Church, of the royal family—the enemies of everything that is to us dear and sacred."

Nicholas (to one of the bodyguard). "Hey, bring 'vodka,' bring champagne, I want to drink—to drink. (Big bottles of wine are brought in, also brandies and champagne, and they were placed near Nicholas).

Nicholas (drinking). "It is delicious. There is nothing better than our 'vodka.' Drink all of you, drink! I am the Czar, the Autocrat. You wish to make 'pogroms?' 'Tis well! But, Stolypin, Witte! Together with the arms you will give to my faithful servants, you should also prepare letters, which you should write—in

my name—that I am much hurt that my innocent subjects should be robbed and murdered. Innocent? Ha, ha, ha! They are certainly the greatest rebels, mutineers; they are the most dangerous elements in the land. They are—(drinks and yawns) a pest, a plague. ‘Dumas’ do they want, with Jewish representatives! I will show them a ‘Duma,’ that—” (trembles with anger).

Marie. “My son, do not worry over it. Give but a wink to your faithful servants, and the streets of Russia will be dyed with the blood of the ‘Zjidovski’ race.”

Yermoloff. “And what answer shall we make to the ‘Muzjikes?’ They scream and howl, make scandal.”

Dournovo. “The Jewish blood will intoxicate them, will dumbfound them entirely, and they will be as silent as dogs.”

Nicholas (shaking unsteadily). “I am the Czar of Russia. I will annihilate all the ‘Muzj—all the Zjides’ of my sacred land. I shall institute an inquisition, as there had once been in Spain. To think that I should suffer anxiety for such beings. I should suffer misery for creatures like these. Oh, Trepoff! Trepoff!” (weeps).

Neidgart (kissing the Czar’s boots). “Great Czar! Everything shall happen as you wish. I lift my glass to the annihilation of all the ‘Zjides.’”

Dournovo. “Bravo, brother!”

Pobiedonostsieff. “That is the way for a true Christian to speak.”

Marie. “And a noble patriot.”

Stolypin. “I will see to everything. I understand my business well.”

Witte. “And what will become of the loan? There will be a terrible crisis in Russia; I see it now, I feel it.”

Yermoloff. "And who will quiet the new savagery of the peasants?"

Nicholas (yawning). "‘Pogroms?’ Well, very well! Crisis? Loans? Well, devil! Trepoff! Already dead, my faithful servant, dead? A bomb had reached him, too? I do not remember now. Ah, what a delicious thing is the Russian ‘vodka!’ Hey, bring champagne! Quick! Why do you stand like idiots? Already many stomachs cut open! Already many Jewish corpses! Ha, ha, ha!" (falls down).

Alexandra (frightened). "We must call a doctor, quick."

Pobiedonostsieff. "His Majesty has taken more ‘vodka’ than his delicate constitution can stand; that is the reason he does not feel well. But it will soon pass. Many times I have already had the honor to see him, and his honored father, in such condition. It’s alright. No harm will come of it." (He makes the sign of the cross over Nicholas and mumbles a prayer).

Marie. "When my dear Sasha used to feel ill, when a gloomy fear used to possess him, the best means of bringing him back to new life was to tell him of new misfortunes upon the hated ‘Zjides.’ It is the same with our son, with Nicholas. Make ‘Pogroms.’ Cut, tear Jewish limbs! Burn their houses and their possessions, and at once bring the good news to us. ’Tis a pleasure to hear it; it is the greatest joy we can have."

Neidgart and Dournovo arise from their places and go towards the door.

Pobiedonostsieff (calling after them). "May the ‘Pogroms’ be a success. In the name of Jesus I bless you."

Witte (as to himself). "European opinion—the Press—oh, the devil take it all!"

Stolypin. "The Czar is in misery. He wants some happiness from 'Pogroms'—let there be 'Pogroms.' The Press—opinions—pshaw! We are the lords of our own land. No one will dare to say a word to us. We will answer at once 'Nye uv svoyi sanii nye sadis,'—'Since it is not your sleigh, don't sit in it.'"



"PROFESSOR" GETZEL

A Comedy in Two Acts.

Characters:

GETZEL LUDLOWJAILSKY, a man of sixty, who always insists that he is only forty-five; a short little fellow, with cat's eyes, blonde mustaches and with a moon-shaped head, covered with hair, half blonde, half white (the result of frequent dyeing). He likes to be called "Professor."

HILKE LEMECHOVSKY, a "melamed," a schnorrer, a gossip and an all-around good-for-nothing fellow, about fifty-five, a bosom friend of Getzel.

CHAIM SONSARA, publisher, a middle-aged man.

BENJAMIN TRUTHMAN, young, but already famed as a scholar and writer; a man of strong principles and sincere character.

MOE ROSE, a poet of about forty-eight.

ALEX RAKOVY, a linguist and critic, a middle-aged man.

TASH, a Yiddish writer.

BUB, an editorial writer of a Yiddish paper.

FISH, an Americanized young man, an active member in a Yiddish daily.

AARON LORY, a colleague of Getzel, his teacher in art and poetry.

KOM, a wealthy publisher.

PLACE—New York, in a Jewish newspaper office.

ACT I.

Lemehovsky (standing near Getzel's desk and holding in his hand a Jewish paper.) "I am always happy, professor, when I read your poems and the poems of our beloved friend the Pittsburg editor. I am quite sure that

both of you and, perhaps, Nathan Cantor also, are the greatest poets of our century. Your style is so sweet, so charming, so full of sentiment that my mother-in-law (and she, you know, is a literary woman, being the wife of a well-known 'melamed' in Israel) thinks that your writings are actually as good as her 'Tchinos.' " (Yiddish prayers for women).

Getzel (with a smile.) "I am very glad that such authorities like you and your mother-in-law appreciate my writings. That is my consolation in the dreary moments of my life, when terrible critics attack me and my literary outpourings, stating that I am not a writer at all."

Rakovy (approaching) "I heard the compliments which Lemechovsky conferred upon you, Mr. Ludlow-jailsky, and I cannot refrain from laughing. You are a writer? Don't be angry if I'll ask you, just between ourselves, what have you ever written that has any literary value? Or, perhaps, you really believe that your articles and quasi-sketches, the best part of which is stolen from old papers, give you a right to the title 'litterateur?' But, I beg your pardon, I forgot that you do not care for such little things as rights, and that is the reason that you, not having the least right, call yourself 'professor.' You are a professor? Who, I pray, gave you this title? Your mother-in-law, your janitor or Lemechovsky? I know that you never studied, I am sure that you have no conception of science and literature. I am positive that you are an ignoramus in the full sense of the word, and you dare to call yourself 'professor?' Let me tell you that you are quite a champion of righteousness."

Lemechovsky (shivering.) "You are wrong, Mr. Rakovy, very wrong! I heard from my mother-in-law

that she heard from a policeman of our district, who understands politics very well, that Professor Getzel was already appointed by Tammany Hall as American ambassador to Turkey, and that he in his humility refused to accept the nomination. You know why? Because he is modest, because he is aware of the fact that the Jews of New York will not enjoy their 'tzimes' and 'kugel' (special Jewish dishes) if they will not find in Friday's Yiddish paper, Getzel's wisdom."

Sonsara, Truthman, and Rose enter and seat themselves in the room adjoining the office; Rakovy and Lemchovsky go out through different doors; Getzel, putting on his spectacles, which have only one glass, takes out carefully from his pockets a bunch of clippings.

Truthman (turning to Sonsara.) "Have you seen already Getzel's statement to Dr. Sharlatansky? Isn't it a disgrace? I wonder how you, his publisher, can allow him to act so mean!"

Sonsara. "You are, I see, 'green' yet in the journalistic field of our Gotham, when you ask me such naive questions. Besides, let me assure you that I like Getzel no better than you do. . . . I remember well his pasquils against myself and my family. I'll never forget the stones which he threw at me for the bread and butter which I gave him; but I need him in my office for the same reason that I need my dog at home; to bark from time to time. I wish, for instance, to publish in my paper an article against one of my enemies. Well, I'll come to Getzel and say: 'Say Getzel, here is a two-dollar bill, and besides, I'll treat you with a nice dinner at Lorbeer's restaurant, if you will only write a strong article against

Mr. So-and-So.' And what do you think? Of course, he will prepare such an article without delay. And for many similar purposes I keep him in my office, though I hate him. I cannot look at him. But, friends, I am a practical man, and I know very well that of such Getzels I can make good use. Business is business."

Rose. "Several times already I, forgetting my muse and my Parnassus, gave him some very prosaic slaps. Once I even threw an ink well at him, and the ink made his face the color of his soul—black. I thought that he would never forgive me, but a few days after one of those occasions I met him in a restaurant with his friend Lemechovsky, and—imagine my surprise—he, the beaten Getzel, came over to my table and stretched out his hand to me, making some flattering remarks on my latest poems. I refused, of course, to shake hands with him, and he, as though nothing had happened, called a waiter and ordered an omelet. He is one of the lowest characters in our ghetto. He and Lemechovsky are a worthy twin. Spit in their faces and they will say that it rains."

Sonsara. "I know well this 'literary' couple, very well. If Getzel will write something, be it as nonsensical as his writings in general, lo! Lemechovsky walks around in the ghetto coffee houses to advertise it; when on the other hand, Lemechovsky will furnish a 'literary specimen'—Lemechovsky and literature; do you hear, gentlemen?—Getzel will immediately come to me and beg me to accept it for my paper."

Truthman. "The funniest thing is that some fools consider Getzel as a Hebrew writer also, though he has as much knowledge of Hebrew as the Russian moujik of calculus. I will wager that he is not able to write a dozen Hebrew words without as many grammatical mistakes.

Yes, he is indeed a 'classical' Hebrew writer, as he calls himself. And do you know why I would also, without any hesitation, confer upon him the epithet classical? Because he ought to be sent to a class for first reader pupils."

Sonsara. "He told me that he published already many Hebrew articles."

Truthman. "Oh, yes! It is a fact, but let me tell you the story of those articles. Some of them he sent in Yiddish and signed his name 'Prof. Getzel,' and the Hebrew editors in Russia, being fond of having a professor among their contributors, translated them into Hebrew; others he sent in his own Hebrew and the editors again translated them from Getzel's Hebrew into real Hebrew."

Rose. "I am acquainted with a very rich German Jew, who always speaks against the Yiddish press. The first time I strongly opposed him and tried to convince him that he is wrong; but after careful consideration I must confess that in many respects he is perfectly right. Getzel, Lemechovsky, Zeif and other 'writers' of the same caliber are the representatives of the Yiddish papers; they are the priests in the temple of the Yiddish literature. Fugh! If our readers will ignore such pen fakirs, then they will be compelled to peddle with pickles, herring and onions, and their place in literature will probably be occupied by real writers, who will raise our literature to its proper level, making it beloved and respected."

Truthman. "Oh, it will take time yet before we will be able to clean the Augean stables of the Yiddish literature. We need many, many a Hercules for this purpose! And where shall we take them? The Cerberus is always

in their way. Oh, the Cerberus; how many talents he has annihilated, he has abolished!"

Lemechovsky (entering unnoticed, reaches Getzel's desk and says, quietly:) "Getzel, dearest colleague; I have just met Dr. Sharlatansky, and he told me that he wants a new statement from you that he cured you of a sickness, I forgot the name of it; it's a queer name. He offers you for your statement five dollars in advance, three dollars after the statement is published once, and a quarter for each reprint of this statement. (Smilingly.) He told me that he will crown your statement with a big picture of you. Think of it! Every day your picture will appear in the papers! Your enemies will see that and will burst from envy. Say, Professor, will you ask Dr. Sharlantansky to order from me also such a statement? I would not require money from him. I will be satisfied if he will print every day my picture and will, from time to time, give pills for my wife's stomach. She suffers very much, poor woman, from stomach troubles. It is a pity!"

Sonsara (rising.) "Getzel, say, Getzel! I forgot to tell you, I want you should write a strong reply to Michael. You know how to write such things. I must not teach you. Here is a dollar! Tomorrow I'll treat you with a dinner and with a pure Havana cigar. Go ahead and write. Quick!"

Getzel (slavishly smiling.) "All right, Mr. Sonsara, your wish is always law to me. Yes, by the way, where is the dollar?" Sonsara gives a dollar to Getzel, and the latter victoriously disappears.

Truthman and Rose, rising together from their seats: "Good-bye, Mr. Sonsara, try to give a good dinner to Getzel; he deserves it—he is a faithful dog!"

Sonsara. "I am a practical man ; business is business. Good-bye, good-bye !"

Rakovy (entering, hears *Sonsara's* words.) "Yes ; all over I hear the cry that business is business. Some time ago the mercantile spirit was only a factor in the literary world, merely a means to make the fine art of literature more progressive, more known. The dominant idea of most of the writers, and even of some of the publishers, was the idealistic side of their work, the betterment of mankind, which could be attained by reading good works. And now ! Real idealism is scarcely found in our literature. It is now a thing of the past, a memory of yore. Many so-called writers of 'Professor' Getzel's type peddle with their pen like the bootblack boy with his tools, i. e., the former is ready to do the work of the latter—to blacken and to shine up, if he is only paid for it. * * * Fate and circumstances made of me a Jewish writer, and I must confess that many a time I am ashamed of my literary colleagues. Some years ago the old and sensational storymaker Zeif published many articles against Getzel, adorning his name with very fine invectives, which he really deserved. And now ! They are ready to embrace each other ; they flatter each other like young schoolgirls ; they almost make love to each other. Why ? Because they have no principles, because they are both ready to sell their souls for thirty pieces of silver, and even for much less. Literature is a mighty power ; literature is the key to life and nature ; literature is the medium for the promulgation of lofty ideas and progressive principles. And what can we expect from people who have nothing in mind except the mighty dollar ? 'Business is business' is a good enough principle, but we

must know how and when to apply it. In the realm of literature, however, it should not be too much considered."

ACT II.

In the same place. A year later.

Tash (mournfully.) "I feel very bad on account of the death of our chief! He died in the prime of his life, having lost hopes of a brighter future. He had many enemies, he had many faults, but nevertheless he was dear to me, very dear."

Getzel. "And I am not sorry at all! You know why? Because he always treated me as an office boy. I shall never forget how he acted toward me all the time, since I worked under him, and especially lately. Six months ago I celebrated my sixty-first birthday, and on this occasion my mother-in-law presented me with a whole set of Oizer Blaustein's novels, and a few of my friends from Vitroe, my birthplace, bought me my own classical works 'Yacubembe' and 'Modern Tchinos' in gold bindings with nice letter heads on the cover. I immediately wrote a notice about this and I gave it to our foreman to insert it in our paper. I asked all my friends and admirers to buy a copy containing this notice, in order that they should know the exact date of my birthday and begin to think already about the celebration of my seventieth anniversary. Don't laugh, my friends, don't laugh! Nine years are nothing, they will fly away before you look around. It is forty years already since I published my first poem 'Ode to a Cockroach,' and it seems to me that it was but yesterday. The cockroach, to which I sang my ode, appears yet before my vision in its old glory . . . But let me continue my story about the notice. Our foreman showed it to our 'tsief,' and he—oh, thunders of Heaven!

—threw it in the waste basket. He begrudged me my fame, the envious one. Now, gentlemen, I am the 'tsief,' and you must obey my orders."

Bub. "What! You are the chief? Perhaps in your own home, but not here. You know well that if you would pay the publishers one hundred dollars a week, i. e., four times as much as they pay you now, they would not permit you to have charge of any department of their paper, because you are an irresponsible person, an imposter, and they would have to answer blackmail complaints every day. We know your record from the "World" and from many other sources. We know that you convinced your brother to embrace Christianity, of which, it is rumored, you are an ardent admirer. We heard that you were 'honored' in different countries for your 'noble' and 'good' deeds. We know that in our paper you are preaching Zionism, nationalism, etc., while in a western weekly you are publishing at the same time (of course, with the help of a translator from Yiddish into English), so-called articles full of insinuations against everything that is dear and holy to us. Yes, Getzel, we know your abilities, we know your sincerity and we appreciate your aims! And if I would have the say, I would not keep you here even as a janitor."

Getzel. "But I am the oldest servant in the office, and since the 'tsief' died, I am the next to occupy his position."

Fish (smiling). "I am really surprised, Mr. Getzel, that you admit that you are already an elderly man! Till now you always stated that you were a youngster yet. Whom or what do we have to thank now for the correct statement of your age?"

Tash. "Don't you understand, Fish? Mr. Getzel Bad-

chon wants that we should prepare for him a seventieth jubilee, and, of course, it is better for him if he will admit his real age."

Lory. "I am preparing already an English poem for this occasion."

Tash. "I never knew that you were a writer and a poet, especially in English."

Lory. "I know English as much as my colleague Getzel knows Hebrew, and if he dares to write Hebrew, why shouldn't I write English? I know that every line of his Hebrew is corrected by others or translated altogether from his Yiddish, why shouldn't I do the same? Getzel pays to people who correct his writings with promises, and I pay for such help cash money. You know, that I am not a writer only, I am also a peddler, and the suspenders and garters which I sell bring me more profit than all my writings."

Fish. "Is your English poem in Getzel's honor done, or are you going to work on it during the 8 or 9 years lacking to his seventieth birthday?"

Lory. "A few lines of my intended poem I can recite for you now, if you want."

Tash, Bub, and Fish, altogether. "All right! All right! Go ahead!"

Lory (in the pose of Hamlet pronouncing the monologue "To be or not to be") :

"Oh, Getzel, Getzel, Getzel!
I like you like my 'ketzel,'
Which is dear to me
Like your poetry,
Because it cleans my house
From each and every mouse,

I like you, my dear colleague,
Like dirt likes the pig.
You are great, great, great,
There can be no debate;
You are a writer with a great name,
Lemechovsky advertises your fame;
Hester and Ludlow streets know you well;
My love to you burns in me like Hell."

Tash. "Your poem is excellent, much better than your and Getzel's poems in Hebrew. You are a poet, but the world does not know it."

Bub. "Even now, after the 'poet laureate' Lory dedicated to you such a literary gem, none of us in the office will give you a chance to think for even one moment that you are the chief here. Oh, no! And if you are not satisfied and you don't want to write for our paper news and, from time to time, articles, under the auspices of Mr. Tash and myself, you can leave the office at any time. That is the decision of our publishers, in whose name I am speaking to you."

Lory. "Don't worry, Getzel dear, I am always willing to take you as a partner in poetry work and in my peddling business. At night we will make in partnership poems, and in the day time each one of us will take a bundle and go for business. The number of my customers, especially among the negroes, is increasing daily, and I cannot attend to them all alone. I shall give you knee pants, petticoats, and stockings as much as you want, and I am quite sure that you will gain from them more than from your writings."

Fish. "A very good proposition for an old man like you, Reb Getzel!"

Getzel, angrily. "The room in which the 'tsief' was sitting is empty yet and it awaits me. I must be the 'tsief'! You hear? I published already visiting cards saying that I am the 'tsief' of our daily; besides, my mother-in-law told all her neighbors that I am the 'tsief,' and I must be so!"

Kom, entering. "What right have you, *Getzel*, to make such a noise in my office? Sit down and prepare news for tomorrow! There was a fire in Cherry street; an old women fell down from the fifth floor in Grand street; a policeman beat with his club a Socialist speaker, and so forth. Go ahead, quick!"

Getzel, slavishly. "All right, Mr. *Kom*, but don't scold me! I am old and nervous, I cannot stand it!" (crying). "Oh, dear mother-in-law! Oh, Lory and Lemechovsky! How unhappy I am, poor devil, how unhappy!"

HEARTS AND STOMACHS

A Comedy in One Act.

CHARACTERS:

HYMAN GELDSACK, a middle aged German Jew, with the side whiskers of a Russian officer, chairman.

BRONISLAV WEINKELLER, a native of Balbirishok, who wants to be considered a German Jew, about 40, blond, with long, curled mustaches, *a la* Wilhelm, secretary.

BORUCH KAHN, a Russian Jew, philanthropist, about 50, with a long, broad beard, sprinkled in many places with gray.

CHILKA LEMECHEVSKY, about 50, a *melamed*, and, at times, a reporter, speaks through his nose and stammers.

MOSES ZUNDEL TRASKI, a native of Chandrikovka, about 45, with a bloated face, van dyke beard, proud of his acquaintanceship with the rich, and always uses the plural "we."

JOSEPH MARKOWITZ, a young man, a member of this organization, an energetic worker.

Place.....New York.

Geldsack (turning to the secretary). "Well, Herr Weinkeller, tell us all you have to say about down-town philanthropic institutions."

Weinkeller (with a submissive smile, looking at Geldsack with meek mien). "Honorable sir! I know well that you know not less, and perhaps, much more than I do about our institutions. I know that, although you are very busy with your numerous business affairs, still you find time to come down to us, and to interest yourself in our small enterprises."

Traski. "Pshaw! Such a philanthropist as the noble Mr. Geldsack we have not seen in Russia."

Kahn (with a sarcastic smile turning to *Traski*). "Even if your assertion is true, still you must remember that you ought to moderate your compliments in the presence of the person to whom they are addressed."

Markowitz (to *Kahn*). "I agree with you entirely! When a jubilee is celebrated, then it is permissible to use hyperbole language—then it is perhaps not out of place to call a second hand Hebrew poet—Jehudah Halevi; a Yiddish rhymster—Victor Hugo; a cheap jester—Gogol, Mark Twain; a man who doles out a few dollars a year for charity—philanthropist, benefactor; a man who mentions in a cafe Karl Marx's or Ferdinand Lassalle's name—a theoretic socialist; a *maggid* who chatters and tries to combine in his talk theological books with Thomas Paine's and Ingersoll's works—modern speaker. But merely to flatter without any particular reason is unnecessary."

Lemchovsky. "Wh-wh-a-a-a-t d-d-do you m-e-e-an? Herr Geldsack is a great phi-phi-phi-lanthropist. He is a-a-a——."

Weinkeller (interrupting). "Our down-town philanthropic institutions are very good ones, but they need money. The 'Sheltering Home' needs money, the 'Hospital' needs money, the 'Burial Association' needs money; instead of money, the first one is getting richer in green-horns, the second—in patients, and the last—in corpses."

Kahn. "Sad, very sad!"

Geldsack. "Why do the Russian Jews hold aloof, and do not help these institutions with advice and deeds?"

Traski. "We also ask the same question."

Lemchovsky. "I shall wr-r-ite an appeal to a local Jewish pa-pa-per."

Geldsack. "The Russian Jews, the immigrants, take up all the places in these institutions, even the cemeteries are filled with them, and if we need any money they hide themselves, and we cannot get a groschen from them."

Traski. "Yes, indeed, sir, though it is not so."

Markowits. "It is very unjust of the rich Russian Jews to refuse to help our institutions, but it is still more unjust of our rich German Jews when they complain that the Russians occupy all the places in these institutions. Do the Russian Jews do it for pleasure? Besides, do we not allow the German Jews to use the 'Sheltering Home' and the 'Hospital' as much as their hearts desire? Do we begrudge them the cemeteries? Nay, they can use them all as much as they wish."

Lemechowsky. "Y-e-es, y-e-e-es, as I am a Jew."

Geldsack (with a smile). "It is well worth while to spend a large amount of money for medicine, to make the stomachs of paupers and beggars smaller. Such a remedy would save a lot of money."

Weinkeller. "Ha, ha, ha! Well said, Mr. Geldsack."

Traski (to Weinkeller). "Does not Mr. Geldsack always speak to the point?"

Kahn. "Mr. Geldsack's proposition pleases you, Mr. Weinkeller? Very well! Perhaps you, Mr. Lemechowsky, will publish an article about it? (Sarcastically), will you not? Oh, no, gentlemen. Do not think that the Russian Jews, although assisted by the German Jews, deserve scorn, and jests, and contempt from the latter. No, indeed! Mr. Geldsack's proposition, though made in a joke, is very offensive to me. Mr. Geldsack thinks that the Russian Jews are drunkards, gluttons, and that

their appetites are insatiable. Mr. Geldsack, like many others of his kind, thinks that the Russian Jews are naturally *shnorrers*, beggars, and parasites. He knows not, and probably does not wish to know that many down-town Jewish families, who have become poor, often live on a piece of dry bread and herring, or else go hungry, rather than ask help from charity. When they do go, then charity is the last straw to which they cling, sinking already with their wives and children in the deep sea of poverty, in the abyss of wretchedness, and in the marshes of necessity. . . . We do not need remedies to decrease the stomachs of the poor; but remedies are needed to broaden the hearts of the rich German Jews. . . . Then, when they will help the down-town institutions, and will show love and appreciation to the poor, then their noble deeds will be an example for those rich Russian Jews who yet keep themselves far from philanthropy."

Markowitz. "Here speaks a man of sense!"

Lemechovsky. "I w-w-will wr-i-t-e to-day a b-b-big article about . . ."

Geldsack (interrupting). "I give eighteen dollars for the 'Sheltering Home' and eighteen dollars for the 'Hospital,' to show that Mr. Kahn's words appeal to me."

Traski (to Weinkeller). "Put it in the minutes."

Kahn. "And I give twice as much for each of the institutions, and I do not care if Lemechovsky will not mention my name in his article."

Markowitz (looks at Mr. Kahn and smiles.)

Traski. "We give five times eighteen cents as our personal gift."

Geldsack (taking out his watch). "It is late. We must go." He adjourns the meeting. All rise and go out.

BETWEEN LOVE AND DUTY

"Often, dear friend, my sufferings are unendurable," said Alexander Michailovich, nervously stripping the petals of an acacia. "The question, 'What am I?' gives me no rest. You will answer, I suppose, 'You are a human being, and everything concerning humanity should interest you.' But, my friend, this answer will not relieve me in the least."

"Wait a bit," cried Solomon Moiceivich, smiling, "I haven't uttered a word yet, and here you are already arguing with me. Supposing, however, that you have guessed my answer—what then?"

"Simply this," answered Alexander Michailovich, warmly, "that if I am merely a human being, with no national ties whatsoever, why do I sometimes feel so oppressed—so extremely miserable—at the sight of my wronged brethren, my kin brothers?"

"Why?" immediately repeated the genial but somewhat sarcastic Simeon Ivanovich, "the Jewish-Christian," as every one called him. "Because, dear friend, do what you will, you are still a Jew; and a birthmark won't wash off in seven waters, you know."

"I am a Jew, it's true," sadly replied Alexander Michailovich, "but you will admit that I know altogether too little of Judaism. Pray, what does it consist in? What are its peculiar, specific traits that distinguish it so sharply from the rest of humanity? Tell me, moreover, wherein in general do you find a basis for this so-called national bond?"

"Your question—questions, rather—cannot be answered offhand; but, then, you know, of course, the breadth of

our Russian character; we never hesitate, and always hit from the shoulder."

"And so," asked Solomon Moiceivich, dejectedly, speaking to Simeon Ivanovich, "do you really undertake to answer his questions?"

"I'll try, at any rate; mental exercise is not yet subject to taxation, even in Russia. Well, my dear Alexander Michailovich, leaving your first questions unanswered, I will endeavor to define to you my own view regarding national ties. Our nature demands, you see, some kind of social affiliation, that would widen the sphere of our interests. The thought that the word 'mine' is not restricted merely to one's home and family, lends one vigor and inspires greater self-confidence. This conception is usually the result of a higher moral development, though the latter is sometimes responsible also for a despotic disposition, a social pride, and the belief in the right to enjoy freely certain personal privileges without deserving them."

"Dear friend," interrupted Alexander Michailovich, "all you have said fitly applies to men in general who enjoy some social standing; but to me—what am I? Let me tell you, if you are in the mood for it, when and how I first learned of my Jewish descent."

"All right, go on," spoke Solomon Moiceivich; "sad or gay, be it only true, and we will listen."

"Well," began Alexander Michailovich, "I heard of my being a Jew for the first time when I was between seven and eight. Having quarreled with a Russian playmate, I came to father, complaining. 'Papa,' I said, 'Vassia called me 'Jew,' and when I answered back with the same, he laughed right out and added: 'You are a

Jew and a fool, besides.' But, papa, why does he call me Jew, while I daren't call him that?"

"Because," my father answered, "he is a Christian and we are Jews."

"We Jews!" This was news to me. Excepting ourselves, there seemed to be no Jews in N——, and if any did live there, I did not know them. My father, as the city physician, always mingled with Christians. I did know, it is true, a poor elderly Jewish woman, who frequently visited us in the kitchen; and our old nurse, Pashia, always reported these visits by saying, 'Mistress, that old Jewess has again been here.' And pronounced the words 'old Jewess' so contemptuously, and so respectfully called my mother 'mistress,' that I could not, of course, suspect that between the mistress and the old Jewess there was such close connection. 'We are Jews,' father said—and we never reverted to the subject. I remember only that I felt grieved and ashamed before Vassia that he should be a Christian and I a Jew. But my parentage was a still greater source of sorrow to me in that it deprived me of all the pleasures my playmates experienced. There never were any holiday celebrations, no Christmas trees in our house, although nothing else was ever denied me. Therein, as I learned afterwards, was manifest the proud, independent spirit of my mother, who could never tolerate a blind imitation of other people's customs, and a studied conformance to them. Yes, the gloomy side of my childhood and youth must be attributed to my utter ignorance of national customs, and, more particularly, ignorance of our own holidays. I saw how others were celebrating; I shared their rejoicings over approaching Christmas festivities, but was not glad-

dened by them so much as Vassia. I remember how mother's words were always ringing in my ears: 'This is a holiday, but not ours.' Sometimes it seemed to me even that these words have remained the fatal curse of all my life, as if everywhere, upon every festive occasion in life, I hear the murmur, 'This is a holiday, but not ours.'

"Yes, my friend, this forms a wide gap in our boyhood. Not knowing any holidays, we miss the poetry of childhood with all its charms. What a hard life this is! How we live, with no ground to stand upon. . . . It is very trying to live under such circumstances, and much more difficult to emerge from them fitted for the struggle for life. What do we receive from these years of childhood? What memories? What can give direction to our minds, and, more important still, inspiration to our hearts? To what are we to pin our faith? In the name of what national pride or weakness shall we raise or lower our people's standard? We are born and grown up, not knowing who we are; the very secret of our births is mysteriously kept from us as if by design. No preparatory materials are given us, and then we are thrown into the world, subject to all the whims of chance. We are torn off from everything which sustained and inspired our parents and grandparents. Nothing is told us in our childhood that would in any degree acquaint us with our history. Finally, we are not given to understand even in the name of what we are suffering persecution and indignity. We were not taught to love and to reverence our past, and yet are blamed if sometimes we thoughtlessly renounce it. Is this just? Is it logical? Here am I, beaten and made miserable; why should I not go there where one can live a better, a freer life? For,

in truth, I bear no conscious love for either side; no one has ever told me why I should love my people. And yet, in spite of all these painful feelings and considerations, I still cannot disown my past: Why? What is the reason?"

"Because you are a Jew, because you form a part of this suffering nation, and cannot live to share its vital forces without partaking of its sufferings. You are a Jew, and as such you unconsciously suffer for your people," spoke Solomon Moiceivich with marked emotion.

"You talk of a 'people,' 'love of kindred,' 'suffering for one's nation,' etc. But, my friend, I am related to it only by birth; but by training and by the whole turn of my life, I have nothing in common with it. Well, I am a Jew, but what have I in common with the Jewish people? Has it given me anything for which I should grow to love it and care to bear its woes?"

"Why?" irritably exclaimed Solomon Moiceivich, "just because it didn't give you anything—and so far it hasn't much to offer to men of your calibre. This battered Judaism looks to us to restore her her former strength; it is for us ourselves to resurrect her—this sleeping beauty—to infuse into her still warm heart the fire of life, a life that should bring back her mighty powers, place her on a level with the rest of humanity, and enable her to say to the world: 'Look at me carefully, and you will see that I am not a bit worse than all the rest, and that I do not deserve your hatred; I am lovable, and will earn your love; let me but draw my breath freely, and loosen my hands from the heavy chains which drag me downward.' And how truly beautiful she is! See how brightly and boldly peer her half-shut eyes! What a wealth of exquisite, immortal thought they express! Ob-

serve her countenance, all deeply furrowed with the indelible traces of her past woes—of which there were entirely too many. But even through these can be seen a brave mind and an iron will. She has been persecuted, and she has been enslaved, but never was she vanquished. She is still alive, and still unconquered. Let us go to her; she expects us to help her, and we have no right to refuse aid; we daren't abandon her now, at the time when she most needs assistance. She has not, perhaps, given us everything that we may expect; but look closely at her, and you will see that she is great in her weakness; without rendering us at present any real service, she still draws us to her by her excellent past. Love her, poor thing; love her, down-trodden and forgotten. Love and pity her!"

"Dear friend," Alexander Michailovich interrupted, "your theory of love absolutely won't bear the test of logic: to love her because she hasn't done anything for us, because. . . ."

"Because," excitedly exclaimed Solomon Moiceivich, "because, at any rate, she is mine; because I am myself part of her."

"Having followed your interminable discussion," broke in Simeon Ivanovich, rising lazily, "I recollected a certain episode from my own early boyhood. Hear it, and then—let there be no more arguing, and to our homes! I was between seven and eight, and my playmate, our poor neighbor's son, was probably no older. We were then living what is called a high life, with no thought for the morrow, and we children were utterly spoiled by over-fondling. Once, and not, of course, without a certain boastfulness, I commenced to show to my comrade the new toys father had bought me on the eve of the

holiday; and at every new toy I, in delight, exclaimed, 'dear papa, good papa!' 'How much I love him!' My friend, delighted no less than myself, sighed and asked, 'Do you love your father very much?'

" 'Why, of course I do,' I answered. 'But you,' said I, smiling, 'you cannot, of course, love your poor mother so (his father was dead); she never gives you any presents.'

" 'Yes, indeed,' said he, 'I love her very, very much,' he added, perceiving that I viewed him suspiciously.

" 'You do love her?' I asked, derisively, 'but why?'

" 'Because,' he answered, 'because she is so very poor.'

"I remember I then had but a vague notion as to what may and what may not be lovable. Now I have grasped it all, understanding you, Solomon, perfectly—and Alexander, too. Of course, it is hard for him to accept what you are preaching; at present it simply runs counter to all his spiritual life. . . ."

"What are you referring to?" sternly demanded Alexander Michailovich.

"To what?" resumed Simeon Ivanovich, smiling good-naturedly, and not noticing the former's severity, "why, of course, I could not be referring to anything else than to Natalia Nicholaevna. But, I warn you, take care; she, your sweetheart, does not suspect that you are a Jew."

It was with a sad heart that Alexander Michailovich, having left his friends, bent his steps, without himself observing it, toward the park where he hoped to meet Natalia Nicholaevna. The reflection that she was altogether ignorant concerning his descent troubled him constantly. He had to inform her of this, and especially to define to himself the relations that were possible under these circumstances. "I'll tell her that I am a Jew," he

thought, "and what then?" He recalled his first meeting with this wonderful girl, "the gray-eyed beauty," as Simeon Ivanovich called her. It happened in summer. A large company had gathered at Simeon Ivanovich's house, among them also he, Alexander Michailovich. Simeon Ivanovich had for some time past been telling him a great deal about this girl, and on entering the big reception room at Ivan Andrievich's (the house of Simeon Ivanovich's father), he readily recognized her among the numerous guests.

"I recognized you," he said to her a few minutes after they had been introduced.

"Did you?" she asked, and smiled at him so sweetly that they seemed the oldest of friends. He saw her but a short while that evening, and hardly spoke to her, she staying all the time with the hostess, helping to entertain the guests.

"There's no need of entertaining you," she said to him as she passed, "you are a member of the house here," and, with a friendly smile at Simeon Ivanovich, "Simeon, he is one of us, isn't he?"

These were almost the only words addressed to him, but they made him feel at the time that he was at home there, that he formed part of the universe they considered as theirs. These words of that almost unacquainted maiden had eased and warmed his heart. Simeon Ivanovich was very much surprised the next morning when, to all his enthusiastic questioning about Natalia Nichol-aevna, Alexander Michailovich could answer only, "Yes, she is very good—that I have observed already; but to come to know her, even slightly, was, of course, impossible."

"No, sir, you are not sincere," said Simeon Ivanovich, "one cannot see her without learning to know her; all her heart shines forth from those gray eyes; it is reflected in them as a face in clear water."

"Yes," Alexander Michailovich admitted, "her eyes are indeed wonderful—really exceptional."

It was then he came to feel that her face would not wane from his memory; he had virtually swallowed her image, and carried it away with him. Two months later they met again, at the University of P., and this second meeting made him feel good and cheerful. It took place in a merry, friendly company of university students. He recalled her very words: "I do not know yet what I shall do here, but I know that whatever I may do will be well and honestly done, because I have come here amongst you in search of life and work, and have brought with me a big stock of energy and faith. I am looking for people who would give direction to my labor and point out the way." This bold little speech of hers flowed with the freshness of a brook, and none there was who thought it funny or stilted.

"No, no," all seemed to say, "such eyes don't lie; they cannot shine by artificial light; they glow with the flame of the heart, with the sacred fire of a pure and free youth." And how beautiful were her eyes! How much kindness there was in them, and how much power! This she made him realize once when he had been to blame for something. How her eyes glared! He shuddered, and thought, "these eyes can pet, but they can punish, too." It was only for an instant that her eyes rested upon him, but he thought right then that he would stand anything in order to avoid such glances. She, exactly surmising his thoughts, smiled, and extended her hand to him, saying:

"I forgive your sin; you didn't know me. And now we are friends again."

From that moment he felt that he had fallen in love with her, and completely resigned himself to this feeling. Still though he loved, and was loved, he was not altogether happy; his conscience troubled him. He knew that he must not love her, a Christian, with *such* a love; he realized that it was stolen happiness, but wasn't strong enough to reject it. He knew all this—knew everything, and continued to drain the cup of bliss, poisoning himself and infecting, it may be, the life of another being, so confidently entrusted to him. And time flew. He grew more and more oppressed at heart; he was conscious of the unsoundness and dishonesty of his position. . . . He wanted to flee from her; he wanted and had to, but could not.

"Life is stronger than I," he said, "it allures me, and I haven't the strength to overcome its influence." And how happy he felt during the few rare moments when he succeeded in pacifying his conscience. But these minutes grew more and more rare. Again her image, as she looked when they had talked about the Jews flashed before his eyes. He was amazed at the coldness with which she spoke of the Jewish people. How cold and how strange she seemed to him, when, to his question, "Why are they persecuted?" she replied—as if some useless old furniture were in question: "They are in our way, they harmfully infect our systems, and we must clear the way of them."

"Clear the way of them?" he repeated, his voice vibrating with emotion, "but how?"

"As you please," she answered (and again her coldness astonished him), "only that we be rid of them."

Here I accept the Jesuitical motto, 'the end justifies the means.' " He did not say anything to her then; he felt the nearness of the impending conversation which would prove fatal to them. He had to tell her much—everything, but for this talk he was as yet unprepared. And, with a bitter heart, he left her. He was fully aware that he could no longer live in this way: this lie oppressed him.

"Thief, thief," whispered his conscience; and still his heart yearned for happiness, if but for a single day.

. . . And more time passed.

And now here he is coming, and does not know what he will tell her. But to-day he shall talk, and this recognition tortured and oppressed him. His thoughts changed as do the views in a kaleidoscope, preventing him from concentrating his mind on the question he had to settle. And he repeated with grief the whole of his discussion with Simeon Ivanovich, who did not regard Alexander Michailovich's position inextricable.

"There are two courses open to you, and both are equally commendable."

"That is to say," smiled Alexander Michailovich, "you are preaching a two-sided truth. What sort of a truth is it, pray?"

"Not at all," said Simeon Ivanovich good-naturedly, "it is an uncontrovertible truth, created by your very position. And so listen; you must study yourself conscientiously, both as a man and as a Jew. If you should find that you lack the courage to renounce Judaism; if this Judaism has clung so fast to you; then there is nothing more to be said in the matter; it will mean that this Judaism is stronger than you, and you will find consolation in this recognition, and bow to the inevitable. But

in that case, of course, Natalie no longer exists for you. This is the first alternative," he concluded, "but there is also another, which is likewise not without justification. It consists in this: you must completely reject your past, in the name of the present and future which are overpowering you. This is also an honest course, and following it does not involve the slightest departure from the truth."

"He is right, he is right," bitterly reflected Alexander Michailovich, "wrong is he only in thinking that truth can have a double form. But there is but one single truth, and therefore, have I no free choice. Yes, the truth is one, and to it I must submit!" He grew sad and his heart commenced to ache.

"I will be strong enough to reject this happiness," he meditated, "I will be able to part from Natalie, if necessary. . . . If," thought he, and stopped, surprised by a voice from a distant lane, where two of his fellow-students were sitting.

"Don't argue, no more arguing!" he heard the voice of one of them. Go where your brethren are suffering, where your family is faltering and perishing, go to them, show them the road to deliverance. You must go to them. Their sufferings shall teach you what to do."

"He loves his people," Alexander Michailovich was sorry to think. And do I? Yes, he is more right than I am. Why are we lingering here in this bewitched circle? We should go to them, our poor brothers. They are expecting us, and it is wrong in us to flee from them. Long and bitterly they have suffered; they will teach me, too, to become reconciled." And sadly Alexander Michailovich stole further away from those noisy lanes where

the ringing speeches and the youthful, irritating laughter were audible.

"Away, away from the noisy and gaudy crowd," he murmured, and still lower drooped his head, while a new light shone in his eyes, as if the deliberate decision he had reached was catching fire within him, and paralyzed by its brightness Natalie Nicholaevna, who had quietly approached to his side.

"Is it you?" rang her gay voice, "I have been expecting you a long time," she added in a lower tone, extending her hand to him.

"Alexander," she called, her eyes looking very lovingly at him, as if she begged to be understood without speaking. "Alexander," she repeated, "we had once wandered from our conversation regarding the Jews, and I wish to justify now my views on them. Did you say the Jews deserve better treatment from us?"

"That is, a more undeserved hatred," excitedly exclaimed Alexander Michailovich. "You are not quite right," gently said Natalie Nicholaevna, interrupting him, "since there can be no question of hatred, at least, in me."

"In you?" and Alexander Michailovich's eyes gazed so dejectedly at Natalie Nicholaevna that she shuddered and asked: "What's the matter with you, Alexander? Why are you so absorbed in this Jewish question?"

"Why?" mechanically repeated Alexander Michailovich. Why, indeed? Many are the reasons, Natalie, very many; but of this later. Now, please continue, as I want to know your opinion."

"Well," she resumed, "to me personally the Jews are repulsive, and I detest them very much. Why? I really don't know. I did not think that my dear Alexander takes so much interest in these Jews, or I should have

noticed them more closely, perhaps," she added, smiling.

"Dear Natasha," he said, "why are you ever so fond of primary discussions? Why do you judge a whole people so superficially, avoiding a correct understanding of it? You say you don't like the Jews. . . . Why? Are they any worse than other races? Has any other people suffered for its ideals and principles, for its religion and truth, as have the Jews? You should kneel before these holy martyrs; bow low before this chosen people, before the Ahasuerus, who always bring into darkest lands the torch of humanity and civilization, righteousness and justice. To your knees when you mention the chosen people, the messengers of God on earth."

"Why?" Natalie Nicholaevna indifferently answered. "Because I don't like the Jews; because no one ever told me that they can be loved. I do pity them, it is true, but even in this pity is sometimes mingled a good deal of contempt. I am never pained by the wrongs they suffer at our hands. I am only sorry that our life forces us to walk alongside a people which lets itself be trodden underfoot by everybody. This is a people incapable of taking offense. But tell me, Alexander, why are you growing so pale? Why does this conversation excite you so much?" she suddenly asked, glancing at Alexander Michailovich.

"Go on, continue," said he, ignoring her questions and feeling how she was going farther and farther away from him, leaving a hollow sore spot within his heart.

"What's the use continuing?" said she. "But if you want, I will say this: I am prepared to pity them in the name of the superior rights of the weak over the strong, but I cannot help confessing to you that this feeling very much resembles that which the sight of a strayed puppy

excites in me: I do feel sorry for it, but, seeing it wallowing in suburban filth and decay, I throw a crumb to it, myself turning away to escape the sight of it greedily snatching the alms. Don't blame me, dear, I can't help it; I am very squeamish."

"Squeamish?" repeated Alexander Michailovich. "And I—I am very proud: I don't need your alms! I don't care to conceal it from you any longer. . . . No, I don't! And why should I?"

"What—what do you mean?" exclaimed Natalie Nicholaevna.

"I am a Jew!" loudly answered Alexander Michailovich.

"You? You a Jew! No; none of this fooling, it's too mean and too cruel."

"No, Natasha," he said softly but firmly, "it is not a joke; such matters are not fit for jesting."

"How? What do you mean? How dare you?" cried Natalie Nicholaevna, beyond herself.

"Natasha! You know it all," he said, "decide what's to be done—what we are to do."

Natalie Nicholaevna viewed him with awe. It seemed that her eyes refused to see and her brains to reason.

"You have insulted me cruelly," she cried in excitement. "but I will try to forget it all, though I warn you, you shall have long to wait."

"No, my friend," he said, raising his head and looking her in the face, "I will not come back to you. I believe in but one truth; I have come to know it, and must depart from you. I have no right to destroy that which I have not created. . . . Upon the ruins of my disconsolate past I shall erect a bridge over which to reach my own people, my brothers and sisters, whose lives are

as dark as is the night without the moon, without stars, without a ray of light.

"Forgive me," he said, and walked away rapidly, feeling that the tears stood ready to gush from his eyes. But she didn't need his tears. He will take them where they may flow, together with the tears of his brethren in the common sea of human suffering.

THOUGHTS .

Years ago I read in Mythology—that mixture of truth and fancy, of art and absurdity—that Orpheus (Apollo's and Calliope's son) possessed a wonderful seven-stringed lyre, and as soon as he began to play upon it the birds became mute; the woods were enchanted; the trees applauded with their green hands; the river ceased driving its waves; and the most dangerous beasts grew still and quiet as lambs while listening to Orpheus' divine music.

O God! I do not ask you for riches, nor fortune, nor pleasure. Give me only Orpheus' lyre! Give it to me—and I shall be happy and satisfied. I shall wander from town to town, from place to place, and by my playing gladden the hearts of the poor and needy. I shall play—and the petrified hearts of "two-legged animals" will be softer and better, and the beasts will cease devouring the best and most beautiful, ignoring altogether the meek crowd which also wants to enjoy something.

* * *

The ancient Graces, who were more beautiful than all other women upon whom the sun shone, selected a place near the Muses, not far from Mount Olympus, in Greece. How times have changed! The modern Graces withdraw from the Muses and Olympus, from art and poetry. And do you know what they change for? For a bag of gold.

* * *

Hercules bound the terrible dog "Cerberus" and subdued him. O, how many Herculesees we need now to subdue the new-born "Cerberuses" who almost fill the whole globe!

* * *

Prometheus stole fire from heaven and brought it to men on earth. The great Jupiter grew angry with him and commanded Mercury to catch the thief, bind him with iron chains to Mount Caucasus, and bring a vulture to eat out Prometheus' heart.

Years ago, when I read this legend, I bewailed Prometheus' fate. I am older now. Time has given me many a lesson, and I have no more compassion on Prometheus. I rather say, how happy was the unhappy martyr! He forgets his great pain, remembering that he made humanity happy by giving it fire, light, sunshine. A man who suffers for an idea, a noble deed, which brings profit to the world, certainly looks with immense pride at the gallows, and drinks, as an ordinary beverage, the poison given him by his murderers.

* * *

Many writers think that they have great talents, because they have blackened much paper with their pens. Fools! The poem, "Magabgaratta," contains 120,000 couplets, and with all that, we do not even know who was its real author. And had we known him for sure, we would never have called him by the name of "poet" or "artist." But if Shakespeare had only written his "Hamlet" and nothing else, his name would live forever.

* * *

The great pessimist, Schopenhauer, refused to marry, so that his pessimism should have no posterity.

* * *

Though the poet sometimes wallows in the swamp like ordinary mortals, yet the poet is an eagle. Of a sudden he shakes off earthly dirt and flies up to the blue sky, where the sun with his glowing rays dries up the humidity which he, the poet, carries from the swamp. The

angels cleanse him, and the Almighty God kisses him with love and hypnotizes him with His kiss, and the poet becomes part of the Divinity.

* * *

My enemies did me oftentimes more good than my "good friends." With the former I used to be careful. The latter used to be careful with me, and did not show me their "true friendship."

* * *

When a woman promises to love, I am quite sure she will forget her words in 48 hours.

* * *

The theatre is a mirror, therefore we have to guard that flies should not soil it.

* * *

Many small men, with little souls, throw their search-light on the sins of greater men (poets, artists, etc.), thinking thereby to lower the latter's greatness. O dwarfs! A nightingale will remain a nightingale, even though stains be found on its wings. But a rooster can only crow, though its wings be well washed and made clean as snow.

* * *

A young lady friend of mine tells me, that she suffers because *one* did not understand her. God, how much must the poet suffer whom, very often, the whole world does not understand!

* * *

A young lady told me that she would never love again, because she had been once deceived. How short is the duration of a young lady's "never!"

* * *

The more I see of society, the more I appreciate solitude.

* * *

Nice phrases without good thoughts are a beautiful binding without a book to cover.

* * *

The clouds rejoice in being able to cover the sun, but the sun rejoices in being able to clear away the clouds.

* * *

Nothing in the world is as good and as bad as love.

* * *

A poet's heart may become stirred up, but not bad. When the ocean begins roaring, it becomes hotter. A poet's heart is an ocean.

* * *

Many authors bury their hearts in their books, not leaving for their own use even the smallest part.

* * *

"Poetry is dear to me above everything," a beautiful young lady said to me; "I could always be happy with a poet!" I went to the young lady, asking for her heart and hand. Her first question was: "How much money do you earn by your poems?" To my reply: "Not very much," she remarked indifferently, that she preferred to wait till my poems became more valuable.

* * *

Many a time the hat is prettier and more valuable than the head that wears it.

* * *

A heart which can be bought is worth its weight in—meat.

* * *

Lovers take for a witness a mute—the moon. Oh, if she could but talk, she would give them very many sage discourses about false promises.

* * *

I know a “literary” beggar who performs the work of an industrious scavenger, by going from house to house looking at other’s faults.

O mean creature! how black must be your soul that you must wash it with others’ mud.

* * *

It is good that the god of love is blind. Could he see everything, he would not be capable of bearing the pain.

* * *

It is very bad that love and truth can agree seldom.

* * *

A true poet is an angel, but even an angel can be misled, if he finds himself always in company with devils.

* * *

With my truths I made many enemies, and with “good words” good friends. I confess that I am much prouder of the first.

* * *

Poor Apollo! How badly you must feel listening to every poetaster calling you “brother.”

* * *

We are no angels, and we must have faults. I despise those men who have the audacity to say that their faults are good qualities.

* * *

A literary dwarf, who understands morals as much as the Russian government justice, goes from house to house slandering me. He is right! I have done him much good. He is *entitled* to slander me. But why do

other literary dwarfs slander me, to whom I did not do good?

* * *

In my heart there burns a fire of love for the whole of humanity; but the tears of humanity quite often extinguish the fire, and my heart becomes like a derelict wreck.

* * *

A poet is a human being and must make mistakes. But to a poet much more must be pardoned, because he suffers more than others.

* * *

Music is an international language, which every man can understand, provided his heart is not dead.

* * *

Humanity must have a religion as much as the lame a cane.

* * *

We are more careful with our money and with our goods than with our children, whom we entrust to every miserable teacher.

* * *

Women could make us men happy, but they do not want to. The tiger finds its greatest pleasure in holding its victims between its teeth.

* * *

You may laugh at us poets, ye prosaic little men! You can laugh, and we shall not be angry. The sun does not look with anger, but with contempt on the lights which say that they are more useful and brighter than he.

* * *

What a wonder, what a great wonder! Women persuaded the whole world that they are "poetic creatures," yet you see how seldom they love poetry without money!

Death does not frighten me; I know the real value of life.

* * *

Time blackens with stains some leaves of the noblest man's life. Sun's eclipses are natural things.

* * *

Men not capable of loving, laugh at love and appreciate money. For men with weak eyes, a small light is more pleasant than the sun.

* * *

When my life becomes a burden to me and men unbearable, I go into the woods and pour out my heart to the trees and to the birds; but in winter I do not go to the woods: the birds have flown, the trees wear cold shrouds, and the woods cast terror over me!

* * *

Many men draw phrases from their mouths as a juggler draws silk ribbons. The man of understanding, however, sees through the deception.

* * *

There are men who believe that reviling is criticism, just as wild men think the croaking of frogs is music.

* * *

I know that I shall not live long. The fire burning in my heart gives, perhaps, light for other people, but myself it consumes, it eats me up with its fiery tongue.

* * *

When older people want to demonstrate that they know better than the younger ones, their first argument is: "We are older than you! We have lived longer!" You have lived longer than we younger ones? Good! But your years can only confirm that you wore out more

hats on your heads than we, and does not prove that you are always brighter.

* * *

Dearer to me are truthful blemishes than false virtues.

* * *

Love can rest in a woman's heart as long as water in a sieve.

* * *

When life becomes a burden to me, the sun ceasing to warm me with his golden rays, the sky looking at me with gloomy frown, and all men being in my eyes like hungry beasts—then the thought of death comforts my soul. It appears to me as a friendly shore after a dangerous voyage on a stormy sea.

* * *

Earlier or later, all must die; but unhappy is the man who must die before having conceived life.

* * *

Some books are their authors' worst enemies, laying bare before all the latter's foolishness.

* * *

A true poet is the crown on humanity's head, but oftentimes humanity's head is so small that the crown cannot stay on.

* * *

Once, riding on a dark night through a forest I rejoiced to see a light in the distance. How great was my disappointment on arriving there to find neither fire nor light, but—rotten wood. In my life such false lights have deceived me several times already. I thought I found men who would brighten my dark life and bring light to my gloomy heart, and what did I find? Men no more shining than the rotten wood I saw in the forest.

Many people think they are great because fate has dragged them high up the ladder of fortune. Fools! The chimney-sweeps are only chimney-sweepers, though they oft stand higher than the rest of them—on the very roof.

* * *

Before the arrival of the Messiah, arrogance will increase, say our sages. What a wonder, what a great wonder that Messiah has not yet come! It seems to me, that there is enough arrogance among “literary men” in America for ten Messiahs.

* * *

“Jews Christianizing—Christians judaizing—puzzle me. I like fish or flesh,” says Charles Lamb, in his “Imperfect Sympathies.” Reform Rabbis, please bear in mind these words!

* * *

“Calumniare audacter semper aliquid haeret,” says the Latin proverb. This is a very good thing for slanderers.



WHO IS HAPPY?

Eight o'clock in the evening. The sun, that burned so fiercely the whole day long, kissed the sea, which resembled a large translucent mirror, and began to expire, shrink and grow dim.

The deep azure sky which retained a drowsy appearance the whole day long, suddenly enlivened and quickly opened its fiery eyes.

And those azure eyes shine and twinkle and look proudly down from their noble height. It seemed as if another instant and they will burst into a laugh and begin to speak:

"Little men, poor souls, how small ye are, and how great your passions, your poverty! Ye live and strive; ye seek riches and love; honor and pleasure; but what find ye?—naught, absolute emptiness! Ye spend your lifetime in everlasting anxiety and craftiness; and very, very often find no time to recite your death-prayer. How foolish ye are, and how insignificant!"

And those eyes shine and twinkle, leap in the air and hob-gobble. How fascinating, how mysterious their secret must be!

In a large park, not far from the city, under a tree thickly overhung with foliage, sit four persons absorbed in deep meditation. All about it is quiet as the grave. Not a sound is audible.

"Sh—! We shall all soon fall asleep if we keep on being silent and do not utter a syllable," suddenly remarked one of the party, a man about thirty years of age, who

was very fastidiously dressed and wore the air of a well-to-do person.

"If you wish," remarked another of the party, "we shall now conclude our discussion as to 'Who is happy?'"

"Very well," rejoined the first. "I shall listen with pleasure to all arguments. Begin, for you are a poet; to you the honor of commencing must now be accorded."

"I respectfully decline the extraordinary honor," the poet replied. "We are four of us here; a doctor, a lawyer, a rich man, and myself. Let the rich man speak first. Money ever seeks precedence."

"Good, then," the rich man answered smilingly, "I shall take the initiative to-night and will earnestly endeavor to declare my views on this question. My opinion is that happiest of all is the man who possesses great riches. Money is every thing. If I have money, I have everything—pleasure, honor, friendship, and love. I step into my factories where hundreds of persons are working and I feel myself a monarch. All labor for me, obey me, and fear me. The machines work on, the wheels revolve, and each revolution of the wheel brings me more and more profit. And besides this, honor and pleasures pour upon me from all sides. Yes, money does make one happy."

"I am much happier than you," the doctor began. "Many lives have I saved, and that which I receive for my labor is given me with repeated blessings. Am I not, then, truly happy?"

"I," exclaimed the lawyer, "am much happier than you. My profession has pity and benevolence for its foundation. I vindicate and save people from prison and death. My reward is bestowed upon me with many thanks. Is there a happier person than I?"

"You are happy," the poet said, "because you do not know what happiness is. You, Sir Manufacturer, by right ought to feel yourself unhappy. It should always be in your mind that in your glass of wine there are many, many drops of your laborers' sweat and blood—your laborers who sit with bowed heads and broken spirits over their machines, and multiply your capital at the price of life itself. No, one's happiness is no happiness when it is founded on the ruins of the lives of others. You, Sir Doctor, you too are not happy. You save one out of a thousand and nine hundred and ninety-nine you transport to the other world by means of your prescription-passes. You, Sir Lawyer, very often vindicate persons who are pernicious to the community. You are very often compelled to use your talent, your eloquence, to paint white the black deeds of your clients. How, then, can you be happy?

"Do you know who is truly happy? It is I, the poet!"

"The stars in the sky, the flowers in the gardens, and the birds in the woods are my friends; and such are constant friends. They never prove treacherous; they never hurt my feelings; they are ever faithful.

"Do I feel unhappy here on earth I mount my Pegasus and up, up I soar to the heavens, to the sun; and there I am as an angel. Do I see the sorrows of man, quickly do I seize my lyre and pour forth my sorrow in poesy; and many a poor and luckless person reads my poems and finds consolation and hope in them.

"And who of you can love as I?

"I assure you that the hearts of a hundred manufacturers, as many doctors, and as many lawyers, cannot entertain as much love for human beings as one true poet; and he is happy who can love. I have more luxuries in

my little room than you have in your spacious mansions ; for the Muses lay the whole world at my feet. Believe me, friends, money can get you pleasure, but never happiness. Happiest am I ! I, the poor, princely poet, who knows where happiness lies."

The poet concluded. The four men leave the park. The birds, who were heretofore silent, began to sing ; and their melody bore this burthen : "Thou art right, brother-poet ! Thou alone knowest what true happiness is. Man, however, is yet too dull, and understandeth but little. Thou, poet, mayst be proud and happy : Thou art a child of Nature, a part of immortality ; thou art undying as God Himself !"



MY CONFESSION

Illness and pain have overtaken me;
I feel that death is drawing very nigh.
Well, let it come! I do not fear or care,
For I am ready and prepared to die.

But little in my life have I enjoyed,
With sorrows manifold my heart has bled,
And the sharp sword that threatened Damocles
Has always been suspended o'er my head.

In life the beautiful and tender flower
Hath seldom smiled, my loving glance to greet,
And seldom has it poured into my soul
Its fragrant perfume as the nectar sweet.

Nothing but thorns and thorns, oh, poisonous thorns
Have hedged my life's dark pathway evermore.
Why should I care that now my little boat
Will soon attain the everlasting shore?

I have no wish to linger or delay;
It soon may be too late. Ere night begins,
The night that soon will close my life's brief day,
Come, hear my last confession of my sins.

This sin have I committed in my life:
I ne'er would play the clownish jester's part;
I never wrote my books or sang my songs
Save when I felt God's fire within my heart.

Also this sin: I never leased my pen
To Satan or the rich. It thus befalls
That a rich heritage I leave behind—
A chilly chamber with four empty walls.

This sin I have committed: that I gave
My time and counsel, and my help and hand,
To those whose wicked souls are black as soot,
Who neither shame nor justice understand;

To base men, to impostors, in whose hearts
Hell burns forever; who sheep's clothing wear,
And o'er their Janus faces draw a mask
Of sleek hypocrisy, all smooth and fair.

This sin have I committed: that the truth
I did not bury in my soul, apart,
But always flung it boldly in the face
Of tyrant rulers, nabobs, hard of heart.

This sin have I committed: that my life
I spent in a poetic reverie,
And did not heed the setting of my sun
Or the dark night descending over me—

A night as gloomy as my fortune is;
Through which no spark of light a gleam can send;
A night all filled with sad and dreary dreams,
The woes of Job, and sufferings without end.

This sin have I committed: I believed
The world was growing better and more wise,
And that the people would no longer bow
To gold and wealth, our modern deities:

Gods in whose name, with devilish boldness filled,
To act the greatest crimes they do not shrink—
Sell souls and trade in hearts, and ruthlessly
A fellow-creature's blood like water drink.

I have sinned, too, in that my fantasy
Built for me beauteous castles in the air,
And I believed that in those palaces
I should forget my constant woe and care,

Which like a leech my heart's blood sucked away,
Constantly, ceaselessly, the whole day long,
And to a mournful lamentation turned
My best, my proudest, and my merriest song.

Here is a catalogue of all my sins.
If any I have missed or not made clear,
The rest you from my colleagues can obtain,
Scattered about the wide world far and near.

My "friends," the faithful ones, the comrades dear
Of the sick poet, will with joy begin
To tell you, swollen by a large per cent.,
My every failing and my every sin.

FEB 7 1977

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 015 873 564 7

PROCEEDINGS OF
THE LARRY LOUIS S. GOTTLIEB
AND O. SMITH, NATIONAL
WASHINGTON, D.C.